

User Guide for the plagiarism detection software at the German Sport University Cologne

The German Sport University Cologne is endeavouring to actively support academics and all students in avoiding academic misconduct on the basis of Memorandum "Securing good scientific practise" published by the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) and the Recommendation issued by the Conference of Rectors and Presidents of Universities and other Higher Education Institutions in the Federal Republic of Germany at its 185th plenary session.

By issuing this User Guide and providing access to plagiarism detection software, the German Sport University Cologne is pursuing the following objectives:

- To raise awareness permanently and in good time of the problems associated with *plagiarism*¹ among students and young academics
- To assist students and young academics in writing scientific texts
- To help examiners carry out formal checks for plagiarism

The German Sport University Cologne provides access to plagiarism detection software

(1) for all University employees who can use this software voluntarily at their own initiative and

(2) as a mandatory quality assurance tool for written theses and dissertations.

This Guide specifies the procedure to be followed in cases of suspected plagiarism in Clause (3).

(1) Independent use of the plagiarism detection software

(1.1)

In order to prevent academic misconduct, the German Sport University Cologne shall ensure that the principles of good scientific practise are taught and practised within the framework of Bachelor courses and particularly at lectures in which key qualifications are taught. During the course of their degree and in attaining academic qualifications, students and young academics shall be monitored and supported in writing scientific texts through constructive feedback.

In addition, all students and employees of the German Sport University Cologne shall have the option of using the plagiarism detection software at their own initiative to check all of their own written work for plagiarism.

¹ "Plagiarism constitutes an intentional and significant deception that an individual has produced a written paper themselves, claiming not to have used any sources other than those provided" (University of Bielefeld, 2013:
http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/gute_wiss_praxis/Handreichung-Turntin-2012.pdf)

(1.2)

All employees and students of the German Sport University Cologne can access the university-specific plagiarism detection software free of charge, using their German Sport University Cologne ID (which is accessed via the German Sport University Cologne's homepage, and using their own password).

(1.3)

Comprehensive information shall be provided throughout the University and in all degree courses at the beginning of each semester as to how individuals can use plagiarism detection software voluntarily at their own initiative.

(1.4)

Files uploaded for plagiarism checks shall be stored for two days.

(1.5)

In order to expand the internal sport science comparison database, the written theses and final dissertations of all degree courses shall be saved on the German Sport University Cologne's local server after they have been reviewed in order to facilitate further comparisons. For copyright protection, each writer may voluntarily consent to their work being automatically stored. They can do so by signing a declaration of consent under data protection law when they register their thesis or final dissertation at the Examinations Office.

(2) Obligation to use the plagiarism detection software

(2.1)

Written theses and final dissertations of all degree courses with the exception of PhD courses shall only be accepted as examination performance by the Examinations Office of the German Sport University Cologne if the exam candidates have checked their work for plagiarism previously at their own initiative, using the plagiarism detection software. Exam candidates shall prove they have checked their work for plagiarism by submitting the complete scan report bearing their own signature and shall attach this report to the hardcopy of their thesis or dissertation. Each thesis shall be submitted as a hardcopy and in electronic format.

Each dissertation shall also be submitted in electronic format. Students submitting dissertations shall not be obliged to check their work for plagiarism at their own initiative using the plagiarism detection software.

(2.2)

The scan report generated by the plagiarism detection software that is attached to the thesis shall help the examiner(s) to grade the written work. The examiner(s) shall not be obliged to take the scan report into account.

(2.3)

The plagiarism scan report generated by the plagiarism detection software that is attached to the written thesis cannot be deemed unequivocal or legally-binding confirmation that the individual examination performance does not involve an attempt at cheating. The examiner(s) of the German Sport University Cologne shall therefore be obliged to further investigate any cases of suspected plagiarism.

(3) How to deal with cases of suspected plagiarism

(3.1)

The German Sport University Cologne construes plagiarism as any attempt to deliberately use someone else's language, ideas, or other original material (particularly also up-to-the-minute material found on the Internet) to a considerable extent in a writer's own text without acknowledging the relevant source or bibliographical reference.

Even if a text was not copied deliberately in individual cases, this shall still constitute a serious violation of the rules of good scholarly work.

(3.2)

In cases in which there are reasonable grounds to suspect plagiarism, the examiner(s) shall have the option of using the plagiarism detection software to check each written examination (assignment, thesis, dissertation, etc.) for plagiarism.

(3.3)

The following scan results can be documented when written assignments and dissertations are checked by the plagiarism detection software:

- The plagiarism detection software identifies no text passages or very few text passages that were not cited correctly:
this does not automatically mean the text does not contain plagiarism. The text could, for instance, contain translation plagiarism or text passages not contained in the PlagScan database.
- The plagiarism detection software identifies unmarked citations:
this does not automatically mean the text contains plagiarism. Plagiarism only exists if it involves wilful intent and is significant.
- The plagiarism detection software highlights correctly marked citations as plagiarised text:
this does not mean the text contains plagiarism. In individual cases, it is possible that the software has failed to identify correct citations.

(3.4)

Regardless of the result of the scan report generated by the plagiarism detection software, the examiner shall be obliged to check each case of suspected plagiarism with utmost care. In each individual case, the final assessment of the examination performance shall be incumbent upon the examiner who shall write an expert opinion on the result of the check carried out.

The expert opinion shall document the unmarked text passages and decide whether this is due to incorrect academic work (resulting in a reduced grade or a failing grade on the paper) or whether it is a case of deliberate and significant deception (resulting in a failing grade on the paper). If this results in a failing grade on the paper, the attempt at cheating shall be placed on the student's record at the Examinations Office.

(3.5)

Section 63 subsection 5 of the Higher Education Act of North Rhine-Westphalia (Hochschulgesetz Nordrhein-Westfalen (HG NRW)) stipulates that students shall be expelled from the university "in the event of multiple attempts at cheating or other serious attempts at deception [...]".

It shall be possible to identify any subsequent attempts at cheating on the basis of the student's file at the German Sport University Cologne.

(3.6)

The entire plagiarism scan procedure shall be treated confidentially.

(3.7)

An ombudsman shall be appointed as a contact person for cases of suspected academic misconduct in accordance with the principles governing the procedure to be followed in cases of academic misconduct at the German Sport University Cologne (Office Communication No.: 17/2016).